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Pito Salas

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EXAMINER

SHERR, CRISTINA O

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3685

MAIL DATE

DELIVERY MODE

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PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 09/916,528	Applicant(s) SALAS ET AL.	
	Examiner CRISTINA SHERR	Art Unit 3685	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 09 February 2009.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-4, 6, 7, 9-11, 13, 14 and 58-79 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-4, 6-7, 9-11, 13-14, and 58-79 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

1. This Office Action is in response to Applicant's Amendment filed February 9, 2009. Claims 1-4, 6-7, 9-11, 13-14, and 58-79 are currently pending in this case. Claims 58-79 are have been newly added. Claims 1, 9, 13, and 14 are currently amended. Claims 5, 8, 12, and 15-57 had been previously canceled.

Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114

2. A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114 was filed in this application after appeal to the Board of Patent Appeals and Interferences, but prior to a decision on the appeal. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114 and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the appeal has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114 and prosecution in this application has been reopened pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on February 9, 2009 has been entered.

Response to Arguments

3. Applicant's arguments, (see **Remarks**) filed February 9, 2009, with respect to the section 101 rejections of claims 1-4, 6-7, 9-11, and 13-14, as currently amended, have been fully considered and are persuasive. The section 101 rejections of claims 1-4, 6-7, 9-11, and 13-14 have been withdrawn.

4. Applicant's arguments filed February 9, 2009 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. Applicant argues, regarding claim 1, that nothing in the cited prior art teaches, discloses or suggests, a "license string being generated using a cryptographic process by encoding data that includes date information corresponding to

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at least one of: a date of creation of the product; a date of a request for the product; and a date of generation of the license string;" and "verifying the license string including by: decoding the license string to identify the information; and determining that the date information is within a valid range".

5. Barber et al (US 5,390,297) at, e.g. col 10, lines 1-27: ". . . the license manager 25A then determines whether the current date is later than the expiration date of the inactive license 27 (see FIG. 2B). If so, then the license 27 has "expired" and the license manager 25A takes the path 33 and returns to the next step 34. If not expired, the license manager 25A then takes a path 35 indicating that the license 27 is inactive, current and valid. The path 35 leads to step 36 that now marks such license 27 as being "active" or "in use" in response to the new request to use the computer program 24A (see item 2 in file 22A, FIG. 2B). This prevents the inactive, current, valid license 27 from being assigned to any other node 12. The license manager 25A then takes a path 37 to a step 38 that returns a status to the computer program 24A indicating that it is authorized to run, which enables the computer program 24A to run on the CPU 18 at the local node 14." Obviously, in determining by date whether the license is valid, the date of creation of the license, length of license validity and expiration date of license are determined and thus a range of dates is determined. Further, it would be obvious to also such data as dates of requesting the product and date of creation of product as alternate license information for cryptographic purposes.

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6. Additionally, Barber at col 8 ln 61-65: “”To authorize the license 27, the installation program 17 reads the UID of the license file 22A from the disk 19 and *encrypts* it to form a first authorization code, referred to as C1.” (emphasis added).

7. Attention is further directed to Griswold (US 5,390,297), disclosing a licensing management system and further teaching sending datagrams to a licensor's site to request authorization for access to a product wherein the datagram includes encrypted information corresponding to a version of the product such as a product model number (Figures 2 and 4; Col. 5, lines 45-50; Col. 6, lines 44-48; Col. 7, line 65Col. 8 line 5). Griswold further disclose decrypting the information and validating this information to allow access to the product after verifying the license has not expired (Col. 9 line 46-Col. 10 lines 36). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of applicant's invention to modify the method of Barber et al and encode any information that corresponds to a license such as a version or model number of the product under control of the license in lieu of a license identification information as taught by Griswold. One would have been motivated to use any type of equivalent identifier in order to effectively identify the license or the product being controlled by the license. Griswold provides motivation by indicating that the types of information within the license database may require other types than specifically shown (Col. 6 line 63-Cal. 7 line 3).

8. Also with respect to the said encryption, examiner had taken Official Notice “that these encoding methods are well known in the cryptography arts and it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art to use block ciphers and character

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text strings in order to take advantage of well known encoding methods as a matter, of convenience.” (Final Rejection of December 27, 2005 at par 12; Nonfinal Rejection of June 8, 2005, at page 7, second paragraph; Final Rejection of October 12, 2004, at page 5, second paragraph). Further, as above, in paragraph 26 of the Final Rejection of December 27, 2005, Examiner points out that Official Notice was used in previous office actions to indicate that it is old and well known in the art to use encoding methods such as block ciphers or character text strings. Examiner also indicated that it is well known in the computer arts to 'keep it simple' with respect to user interaction with computer programs. The capital letters O and I are easily confused with the numbers 0 and 1 that add to the complexity of reading what may be a long string of characters. Since applicant has not attempted to traverse this Official Notice statement, examiner is taking the common knowledge or well-known statement to be admitted prior art. A similar note may be found in the Nonfinal Rejection of June 8, 2005 at paragraph 16.

9. Because this factual finding is now considered “admitted prior art”, the examiner respectfully requests the Board to take this application as is (*i.e.*, it is of record). The examiner respectfully requests states that the Board must consider all evidence of record and has limited authority to change what is, and what is not, of record.

10. Note also that Barber fails to explicitly disclose wherein the encoded information corresponds to at least one of 1) a date of creation of the product, 2) a version of the product, 3) a date of request for the product, and 4) a date of generation of the license string. Griswold discloses a licensing management system and further teaches sending datagrams to a licensor's site to request authorization for access to a product wherein

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the datagram includes encrypted information corresponding to a version of the product such as a product model number (Figures 2 and 4; Col. 5, lines 45-50; Col. 6, lines 44-48; Col. 7, line 65Col. 8 line 5). Griswold further discloses decrypting the information and validating this information to allow access to the product after verifying the license has not expired (Col. 9 line 46-Col. 10 line 36). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of applicant's invention to modify the method of Barber et al and encode any information that corresponds to a license such as a version or model number of the product under control of the license in lieu of a license identification information as taught by Griswold. One would have been motivated to use any type of equivalent identifier in order to effectively identify the license or the product being controlled by the license. Griswold provides motivation by indicating that the types of information within the license database may require other types than specifically shown (Col. 6 line 63-Col. 7 line 3).

11. Additionally, attention is directed to Barber et al (US 5,390,297) at, e.g. col 10, lines 1-27: "... the license manager 25A then determines whether the current date is later than the expiration date of the inactive license 27 (see FIG. 2B). If so, then the license 27 has "expired" and the license manager 25A takes the path 33 and returns to the next step 34. If not expired, the license manager 25A then takes a path 35 indicating that the license 27 is inactive, current and valid. The path 35 leads to step 36 that now marks such license 27 as being "active" or "in use" in response to the new request to use the computer program 24A (see item 2 in file 22A, FIG. 2B). This prevents the inactive, current, valid license 27 from being assigned to any other node 12. The license

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manager 25A then takes a path 37 to a step 38 that returns a status to the computer program 24A indicating that it is authorized to run, which enables the computer program 24A to run on the CPU 18 at the local node 14.” Obviously, in determining by date whether the license is valid, the date of creation of the license, length of license validity and expiration date of license are determined and thus a range of dates is determined. Further, it would be obvious to also include such data as dates of requesting the product and date of creation of product as alternate license information for cryptographic purposes.

12. Barber et al further fail to disclose wherein the data encoded to generate the license string comprises a license data and a validation data and verifying the license string further includes (i) decoding the license string to obtain the license data and the validation data, (ii) computing a generated validation data based at least in part on at least a portion of the decoded license data, and (iii) comparing the decoded validation data with the generated validation data.

13. Ross et al disclose a method for electronic licensing and teach a method of validating a license by decoding the license string to obtain the license data and the validation data (Col. 9, lines 1-11; Col. 7, lines 40-65; decrypting the signature to obtain the clear text (license data) and the validation data (message digest), computing a generated validation data based at least in part on at least a portion of the decoded license data (Col. 9, lines 1-11; Col. 7, lines 40-65; applying the clear text to an algorithm to generate the message digest) and comparing

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the decoded validation data with the generated validation data (Col. 9, lines 1-11; Col. 7, lines 40-65; comparing the two message digests).

14. at the time of applicant's invention to modify the method of Barber et al and include the ability to validate the license as taught by Ross et al in an effort to ensure that the license is valid and has not been altered or tampered with in any way. Using digital signatures and hashing algorithms to generate message digests has long been known in the encryption art as an effective method for validating a message or any type of text or data.

Official Notice

15. Please note that, in paragraph 26 of the Final Rejection of December 27, 2005, Examiner points out that Official Notice was used in previous office actions to indicate the following:

- a. It is old and well known in the art to use encoding methods such as block ciphers or character text strings.
- b. It is old and well known in the computer arts to 'keep it simple' with respect to user interaction with computer programs.
- c. The capital letters O and I are easily confused with the numbers 0 and 1 that add to the complexity of reading what may be a long string of characters.

16. Since applicant has not attempted to traverse this Official Notice statement Accordingly, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, examiner is

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taking the common knowledge or well-known statement to be admitted prior art. A similar note may be found in the Nonfinal Rejection of June 8, 2005 at paragraph

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 101

17. 35 U.S.C. 101 reads as follows:

Whoever invents or discovers any new and useful process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter, or any new and useful improvement thereof, may obtain a patent therefor, subject to the conditions and requirements of this title.

18. Claims 1-4, 6-7, 9-11, and 13-14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 because the claimed invention is directed to non-statutory subject matter. Based on Supreme Court precedent (See also *Diamond v. Diehr*, 450 U.S. 175, 184 (1981); *Parker v. Flook*, 437 U.S. 584, 588 n.9 (1978); *Gottschalk v. Benson*, 409 U.S. 63, 70 (1972); *Cochrane v. Deener*, 94 U.S. 780, 787-88 (1876)) and recent Federal Circuit decisions, a §101 process must (1) be tied to another statutory class (such as a particular apparatus) or (2) transform underlying subject matter (such as an article or materials) to a different state or thing. In addition, the tie to a particular apparatus, for example, cannot be mere extra-solution activity. See *In re Bilski*, 88 USPQ2d 1385 (Fed. Cir. 2008).

19. In this case, claim 1 recites generation of a license string, verification of the license string by decoding certain data, and encoding data without disclosing who or what performs such actions. Thus, claim 1 is not properly tied to any other statutory class. For these reasons, independent claim1, and its dependent claims 2-4, 6-7, 9-11, and 13-14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

20. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

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The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

21. Claims 58-68 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

22. It has been held that a claim that recites both an apparatus and a method for using said apparatus is indefinite under section 112, paragraph 2, as such a claim is not sufficiently precise to provide competitors with an accurate determination of the 'metes and bounds' of protection involved. *IPXL Holdings LLC v. Amazon.com Inc.*, 77 USPQ2d 1140 (CA FC 2005); *Ex parte Lyell*, 17 USPQ2d 1548 (B.P.A.I. 1990). A single claim which purports to be both a product or machine and a process is ambiguous and is properly rejected under 35 USC 112, second paragraph, for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the invention. *Ex Parte Lyell*, 17 USPQ2d 1548 (B.P.A.I. 1990).

23. In this case, claim 58 recites both an apparatus "system for controlling access . . . " and method steps for the use of the apparatus, e.g., "license string being generated", "decoding the license string . . . ", "determining that the date information" etc. For these reasons, independent claim 58 and its dependent claims 59-68 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

24. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and

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the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

25. Claims 1, 4, 6-7, 10-11, 61-63, 65-66, 58, 69, 72-74, and 76-77 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Barber et al (U.S. 5,390,297) in view of Griswold (U.S. 5,940,504), and Ross et al (U.S. 5,553,143).

26. As per Claims 1, 58, and 69 --

27. Barber et al disclose a method, system, and computer program for controlling access to a product, the method comprising:

- receiving a license string that controls access to the product, the license string being generated using a cryptographic process by encoding information corresponding to a license identifier information (Col. 6, lines 43-60; Col. 9 line 67-Col. 10 line 7);
- verifying the license string using a processor by decoding the license string to identify the information (Col. 10, lines 1-8) and determining that the information is within a valid range (Col. 10, lines 1-15); and
- allowing access to the product based on verifying the license string (Col. 10, lines 1-27).

28. Barber et al, however, fails to explicitly disclose wherein the encoded information corresponds to at least one of 1) a date of creation of the product, 2) a version of the product, 3) a date of request for the product, and 4) a date of generation of the license string. Griswold discloses a licensing management system and further teaches sending datagrams to a licensor's site to request authorization for access to a product wherein the datagram includes encrypted information corresponding to a version of the product

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such as a product model number (Figures 2 and 4; Col. 5, lines 45-50; Col. 6, lines 44-48; Col. 7, line 65Col. 8 line 5). Griswold further discloses decrypting the information and validating this information to allow access to the product after verifying the license has not expired (Col. 9 line 46-Col. 10 line 36). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of applicant's invention to modify the method of Barber et al and encode any information that corresponds to a license such as a version or model number of the product under control of the license in lieu of a license identification information as taught by Griswold. One would have been motivated to use any type of equivalent identifier in order to effectively identify the license or the product being controlled by the license. Griswold provides motivation by indicating that the types of information within the license database may require other types than specifically shown (Col. 6 line 63-Col. 7 line 3).

29. Additionally, attention is directed to Barber et al (US 5,390,297) at, e.g. col 10, lines 1-27: “. . . the license manager 25A then determines whether the current date is later than the expiration date of the inactive license 27 (see FIG. 2B). If so, then the license 27 has "expired" and the license manager 25A takes the path 33 and returns to the next step 34. If not expired, the license manager 25A then takes a path 35 indicating that the license 27 is inactive, current and valid. The path 35 leads to step 36 that now marks such license 27 as being "active" or "in use" in response to the new request to use the computer program 24A (see item 2 in file 22A, FIG. 2B). This prevents the inactive, current, valid license 27 from being assigned to any other node 12. The license manager 25A then takes a path 37 to a step 38 that returns a status to the computer

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program 24A indicating that it is authorized to run, which enables the computer program 24A to run on the CPU 18 at the local node 14.” In determining by date whether the license is valid, the date of creation of the license, length of license validity and expiration date of license are determined and thus a range of dates is determined. Further, it would be obvious to also include such data as dates of requesting the product and date of creation of product as alternate license information for cryptographic purposes.

30. Barber et al further fail to disclose wherein the data encoded to generate the license string comprises a license data and a validation data and verifying the license string further includes (i) decoding the license string to obtain the license data and the validation data, (ii) computing a generated validation data based at least in part on at least a portion of the decoded license data, and (iii) comparing the decoded validation data with the generated validation data. Ross et al disclose a method for electronic licensing and teach a method of validating a license by decoding the license string to obtain the license data and the validation data (Col. 9, lines 1-11; Col. 7, lines 40-65; decrypting the signature to obtain the clear text (license data) and the validation data (message digest), computing a generated validation data based at least in part on at least a portion of the decoded license data (Col. 9, lines 1-11; Col. 7, lines 40-65; applying the clear text to an algorithm to generate the message digest) and comparing the decoded validation data with the generated validation data (Col. 9, lines 1-11; Col. 7, lines 40-65; comparing the two message digests). Accordingly, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of applicant's invention to modify the

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method of Barber et al and include the ability to validate the license as taught by Ross et al in an effort to ensure that the license is valid and has not been altered or tampered with in any way. Using digital signatures and hashing algorithms to generate message digests has long been known in the encryption art as an effective method for validating a message or any type of text or data.

31. As per Claims 4, 6-7, 61-63, and 72-74 –

32. Barber et al and Griswold do not specifically disclose that the encoding method includes using block ciphers or character text strings. Examiner takes Official Notice that these encoding methods are well known in the cryptography arts and it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art to use block ciphers and character text strings in order to take advantage of well known encoding methods as a matter of convenience. With respect to claim 7, it is well known in the computer arts to "keep it simple" with respect to user interaction with computer programs. The capital letters O and I are easily confused with the numbers 0 and 1 that add to the complexity of reading what may be a long string of characters. See Official Notice, above.

33. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill at the time the invention was made to exclude the characters capital O, capital I, and the numbers 0 and 1 from the License string generated by the invention of Barber et al ('297) in order to minimize user confusion in the entry of the license string.

34. As per Claims 10, 65 and 76 –

35. Barber et al ('297) further discloses the license string controls access to a single facility, see Column 8, lines 40-41.

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36. As per Claims 11, 66, and 77 –

37. Barber et al ('297) further discloses the license string controls access to multiple facilities, see Column 8, lines 20-48.

38. Claims 2-3, 59-60, and 70-71 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Barber et al, U.S. Patent No. 5,390,297, Griswold, U.S. Patent No. 5,940,504 and Ross et al, U.S. Patent No. 5,553,143 as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Smartsoft (Product Sales and Upgrade Sales).

39. As per Claims 2-3, 59-60, and 70-71 –

40. Barber et al further disclose that the customer supplies encrypted license string information, however, fails to specifically disclose that this is provided using a dialog box or entry field. Smartsoft discloses using a dialog box or entry field to provide the license string (Page 4). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of applicant's invention to modify the method of Barber et al and provide this license string any number of ways including using a dialog box or entry field as taught by Smartsoft in an effort to provide convenience and flexibility to the end user by using a web based system.

41. Claims 9, 64 and 75 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Barber et al, U.S. Patent No. 5,390,297, Griswold, U.S. Patent No. 5,940,504 and Ross et al, U.S. Patent No. 5,553,143 as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of He et al, U.S. Patent No. 6,088,451.

42. As per Claims 9, 64 and 75

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43. Barber et al ('297) does not specifically disclose wherein the license string includes a first checksum and verifying the license string comprises generating a second checksum based on the information and comparing the second checksum with the first checksum.

44. He et al (451) teaches the use of a checksum, a well known method for data string validation, see Column 10, lines 18-47, for the benefit of protecting information from being accidentally or maliciously changed and ensuring correct communication between user and the network. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill at the time the invention was made to include the checksum validation taught by He et al ('451) in the invention of Barber et al ('279) for the benefit of protecting information from being accidentally or maliciously changed and ensuring correct communication between user and the network.

45. Claims 13-14, 67-68, and 78-79 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Barber et al (U.S. 5,390,297), Griswold (U.S. 5,940,504), and Ross et al (U.S. 5,553,143) as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Edwards, Jr. (U.S. 5,014,234).

46. As per Claims 13, 67, and 78 –

47. Barber et al ('297) does not specifically disclose wherein access to the product is allowed for only a predetermined period of time in the absence of verifying the license string. Edwards, Jr., ('234) teaches limited usage for predetermined period of time before the license string is entered, see Column 1, line 25 - Column 2, line 3 for the

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benefit of providing a "try before you buy" license feature and still allow protection of the software.

48. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill at the time the invention was made to modify the invention of Barber et al ('297) to allow usage for a predetermined period of time before the license string is entered providing a "try before you buy" license feature and still allow protection of the software.

49. As per Claims 14, 68, and 79 –

50. Barber et al ('297) does not specifically disclose entry of the license string extends the predetermined time for which the product will function. Edwards Jr ('234) teaches entry of the defuse number extends the usage for predetermined period of time, see Column 8, lines 16 - 39 for the benefit of allowing continued use of the product and still allow protection of the software. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill at the time the invention was made

51. to modify the invention of Barber et al ('297) to allow usage for a predetermined period of time after the license string is entered for the benefit of allowing continued use of the product and still allow protection of the software.

52. Please note that, in paragraph 26 of the Final Rejection of December 27, 2005, Examiner points out that Official Notice was used in previous office actions to indicate that it is old and well known in the art to use encoding methods such as block ciphers or character text strings. Examiner also indicated that it is well known in the computer arts to 'keep it simple' with respect to user interaction with computer programs. The capital letters O and I are easily confused with the numbers 0 and 1 that add to the complexity

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of reading what may be a long string of characters. Since applicant has not attempted to traverse this Official Notice statement, examiner is taking the common knowledge or well-known statement to be admitted prior art. A similar note may be found in the Nonfinal Rejection of June 8, 2005 at paragraph 16.

53. Examiner's Note: Examiner has cited particular columns and line numbers in the references as applied to the claims below for the convenience of the applicant. Although the specified citations are representative of the teachings in the art and are applied to the specific limitations within the individual claim, other passages and figures may apply as well. It is respectfully requested that the applicant, in preparing the responses, fully consider the references in entirety as potentially teaching all or part of the claimed invention, as well as the context of the passage as taught by the prior art or disclosed by the examiner.

Conclusion

54. The prior art previously made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

55. Hasebe et al disclose a software license protection method using cryptography wherein a request is for authorized use of the software is encrypted and subsequently validated by an accounting server.

56. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to CRISTINA SHERR whose telephone number is (571)272-6711. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:30-5:00 Monday through Friday.

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57. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Calvin L. Hewitt, II can be reached on (571)272-6709. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

58. Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

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